

House Republican Press Release

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**Rep. Farr to Judiciary Committee Co-chairs: Proceed with Hearing on Delayed Release of Court Ruling**



*Testimony from Former Chief Justice Sullivan not Needed for Committee's Purposes*

The co-chairmen of the General Assembly's Judiciary Committee should not have cancelled a hearing scheduled for Tuesday that was to begin looking into why former Supreme Court Justice William J. Sullivan delayed the release of a court ruling simply because a Superior Court judge today prevented the committee from compelling Sullivan to testify, state Representative Bob Farr, R-19<sup>th</sup> District, the committee's House Ranking Member, said today.

The Judiciary Committee had scheduled a hearing for Tuesday on the question of why Sullivan delayed the release of a court ruling earlier this year in an apparent effort to help Justice Peter Zarella avoid criticism during legislative hearings on his nomination to become the new chief justice of the state Supreme Court.

The committee co-chairs, state Senator Andrew J. McDonald, D-27<sup>th</sup> District, and state Representative Michael P. Lawlor, D-99<sup>th</sup> District, cancelled the hearing after learning that Waterbury Superior Court Judge Dennis Eveleigh had quashed a subpoena that would have compelled Sullivan to appear before the committee and testify on the matter.

Three other justices, including Zarella, Acting Chief Justice David Borden and Justice Richard Palmer, have agreed to appear before the committee.

"There was no need for the Judiciary Committee's co-chairs to cancel the hearing," Representative Farr said. "They could have proceeded with it and obtained the information they are seeking from Justices Borden, Palmer and Zarella. Instead, they have apparently decided to focus their attention on a court battle over whether or not Justice Sullivan can or cannot be forced to appear before the committee."

"If the co-chairs are really interested in finding out why Justice Sullivan delayed the release of a controversial court ruling, they should have allowed the hearing to proceed," Representative Farr said. "It's quite likely the testimony the other three justices would have provided would have answered whatever questions the committee has about this matter. If their testimony was insufficient, they still could have pursued the court case. In any case, there was no need to cancel the hearing. The committee has a history of being deferential to the courts in an effort to preserve the traditional independence of our judicial system. This is a situation where that deference should have been maintained."